

# Best And Worst Buys

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thing, I think there is a need for more choices of pickers that have stripper plates instead of snapping rollers. I would especially like to see this in a 3-row, 30-in. model, since I'm considering switching to 30-in. rows. I harvest all my corn in the ear."

Rod nominates his model 100 Gehl grinder-mixer as his "best buy". "It has good capacity and I like the hydraulic auger, and the easy access to controls while grinding. Also, it's fast unloading and has a good winch on the output auger. Did have a problem with the auger between the mill and tank while grinding hay, but the dealer and company made the necessary repairs and changes promptly."

**Martin Dube, New Richmond, Prine Edward Island:** Martin's pleased with his Stanhay precision seeder. "Does an excellent job and very good at following the field contour."

"My worst buy was a 70 hp Belarus 500 tractor. The first month, we had to change the head and gaskets. At 330 hrs., the clutch was gone. Also had to change the center of one rear wheel within a year and a half. The steering is awkward and the transmission often locks in gear if you don't shift carefully. The dealer does his best with service."

**Wayne Hopper, Brussels, Ontario:** "My worst buy is a Massey Ferguson 655 hydrostatic drive swather that is now four years old," says Wayne. "The first season, we drove 15 miles to the dealer for repairs at least once a day. Everything went wrong — from bearings, belts, chains, and sprockets to pulleys and broken welds."

"We tried four different types of oil in the hydrostatic drive, trying to get it to climb our not-so-big hills. Now, we change oil and filters three times a year just to keep it operating. The pickup reels were not welded straight and, if we don't oil them daily, they will seize up. After two years, we figured we had replaced everything possible but we still have many problems."

**Ronald Gramenz, Hazelton, Iowa:** Ronald's pleased with his model 400 IH Cyclo 8-row planter. "I like the large, easy-to-fill, center-mounted hopper. It's easy to change populations and it plants accurate. Had a couple of things go wrong — the gauge makers wouldn't alternate but the dealer took care of it. Also, I'd sure like to see how the engineers raise those two rows while installing the transport wheel."

Ronald is disappointed with his "Feterel 66-ft., 8-in. auger. Had it four years and used it once. It was always broken down. Everything happened to it."

**Gene Rubel, Marathon, Iowa:** "We had trouble the first year and every year after," says Gene about his 815 IH diesel combine, purchased new in 1973. "Had engine trouble the first year that the dealer couldn't fix until the season was over. Straw walkers broke and reverse went out so we combined a whole season without re-

verse. Had trouble getting straw through straw chopper. Final drives on both sides went out."

"We had such poor service on this machine I wouldn't recommend it to anyone. Combine must have been made on a Monday or Friday. Have never had such luck with any machine — new or used."

Gene lists his DMI Hydrwide plow as his "best buy". "We can plow the heaviest stalks under without discing or cutting. Excellent clearance and very well built."

"Another good purchase was my Ford F-150 4 x 4 pickup with 300, 6-cylinder engine and 4 speed transmission. Bought it new in early 1978 and it now has 30,000 miles on it. Like the lockout hubs and can get 15 mpg easily. Has required no repairs other than normal maintenance."

**Don Hildreth, Des Moines, Iowa:** "I didn't think it was possible but I can work corn stalk ground easily after harvest with no discing," says Don who is happy with his Bush Hog chisel plow, model 1500.

**David Anderson, Postville, Iowa:** He's well pleased with his Mix Mill 10 hp. automated electric feed mill. "Cost is close to that of a portable feed mill, but maintenance and operating costs are far less. Also, much less time is spent grinding feed because you can just start it and leave it. The installation crew did an excellent job and wasted no time."

On the negative side, he's unhappy with his Menard machine shed. "The ridgetite seams and windows were not caulked. The roof has many nail hole leaks, and the steel sheets were apparently cut too short on the sliding doors so any rain comes in over

**"It's been over a year and nothing has ever been done."**

the top and down the inside of the door. We've told the salesman several times and have written to the company. It's been over a year and still nothing has been done."

**Ray Horne, Penn., N. Dak.:** Ray's had trouble with his Cole planter. "It's not made for planting over 3 mi. per hour on anything but a perfectly smooth seedbed. Instead of depth control wheels, it has flat pads that wear out quickly, even with inexpensive fiberglass add-ons. Seed bounces out of the plate notches and it doesn't plant evenly."

On the plus side, Ray says his Krause rock flex tandem disc "does a beautiful job. Leaves no ridges and I can seed right behind it."

**Stanley J. Kondelik, Circle, Mont.:** "This tractor has been a pleasure to operate and has had very few mechanical problems," says Stanley

about his 1570 Case tractor. "The dealer has also been good with service."

On the minus side, he's had trouble with his Massey Ferguson 750 combine. "Had less than 10 hours on the machine when the engine blew up. Dealer installed a new short block which was also faulty. The Perkins engine in this machine is one of the poorest I have seen. Also, original equipment belts are very poor quality. The machine does work well when it isn't broken down, and the dealer has been good. He had another machine out in the field 3½ hrs. after mine broke down."

**Hanson and Roberts, Gilbertville, Mass.:** They're pleased with their Knight "Soup or Solid" 350 manure spreader. "After a slight modification we had to add a piece of fire hose to the front and back of it. We are well satisfied with this spreader. It will handle very soupy manure or take a large load of solid manure."

**Lane C. Briggs, B Bar B Ranch, Great Falls, Mont.:** "This is a well-built machine," says Lane about his Hesston 1090 mower-conditioner. "Cuts the most difficult grass or weeds and easily floats over irrigation border dikes. Makes a beautiful windrow."

**Clare Kerr, Bruce, S. Dak.:** He's disappointed with his new TR-70 New Holland combine. "Had altogether too much trouble with it for a new machine. Had a lot of chain problems, hydraulic trouble and some bearing problems. Basically, the combine worked alright but we had 12 service calls in one month of corn harvesting."

On the positive side, he's pleased with his John Deere 8-row planter with a Wetherell transport. "Bought the 7000 planter last spring and liked the job it did. Planted some for a neighbor and he said he never had a stand of corn like it. At first we used a flat trailer to move it, but later got a Wetherell transport. It works fine."

**Burnell Beilke, Buffalo, N. Dak.:** "We try to buy name brand products that are proven good," says Burnell, who is well pleased with his 1979 4640, quad range John Deere tractor. "We chop 200 acres of alfalfa three times a year and found this a very good pto tractor. You set your speed and it stays there. Cab is quiet. Just no problems after 300 hours."

Another "best buy" for Burnell was his Hesston 5800 round baler. "Makes excellent, easy-to-start bales. Can bale straw at 8 mph. A few bearings went out on roller ends but they're easy to replace in about 15 min."

**Angelo Battisti, St. Johnsville, N.Y.:** "My wife and I can keep in touch with each other within a 10-mi. radius. Works well in either tractors or cars. We have a base in our home," reports Angelo about his "best buy" Standard two-way radio.

**Marion M. Taylor, Spotsylvania, Va.:** "I've owned five Ford tractors since 1970 — a 3000, a 4000, two 5000's and an 8600. I still have one 5000 and the 8600. Ford has given me rotten service and I'm switching to John Deere mainly because of service that I can count on when needed

during the busy season. I farm 1,100 acres of corn, wheat, soybeans and hay, so when the sun shines, we have to roll. And that means service on equipment when you need it."

Marion's also disappointed with his Ford 230 16½-ft. disc harrow with fold-up wings. "I put five bearings in last spring and lost another during fall planting. Also, it sways and bobs up and down on the road like a seesaw. Ford Motor Co. has given me poor service."

Heading his "best buy" list is his Deere 2840 tractor. "I've used this tractor on just about every job on the farm, from cultivating beans to chopping silage. Has plenty of power and handles like a dream. Runs quiet and I don't have a ringing in my head after operating it 10 to 12 hrs. a day like another brand I have. Dealer gives top service."

**Michael De Sutter, Marshall, Minn.:** He's happy with his "best buy" New Holland 273 square baler.

**"I'd never buy a tractor that's a different color than what the dealer sells."**

"Have only used it one year but have had no trouble at all. Runs as smooth and quiet as a sewing machine."

On the negative side, Michael notes that, "I'd never buy a tractor in a dealer's lot that is a different color than what the dealer is selling." He's disappointed with a used John Deere he bought from an International dealer. "I have a hard time starting it. The battery is always down. Two different mechanics worked on it, but I still need a battery charger to start it. I like John Deere but have a lemon here."

**Randy Lovington, Hurst and Lovington, Meigs, Ga.:** He puts FARM SHOW and Ray Stueckle's "Combine Settings For Better Harvesting" book at the top of his "best buy" list. "FARM SHOW" is interesting as well as informative, and Stueckle's book has been a great help in solving some problems we ran into combining corn and soybeans. Both FARM SHOW and Stueckle's book were gifts from a friend and valuable ones."

Randy's disappointed, though, with the 13-ft. floating cutterbar header on his Gleaner F2 combine. "It's not so much that it's a bad piece of equipment, but that its performance is overshadowed by the 454 row crop header from John Deere. Header loss from reel shatter, and shelled beans spilling out from under the header auger and then over the front of the cutter at the center of the header, are the two major problems."

Randy adds that he's pleased with the Gleaner F2 itself. "The machine was very reliable this past harvest season, with only three very minor 'bugs' to work out."